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INTERESTING NARRATIVE;
BEING A
JOURNAL OF THE FLIGHT

OF

ALFRED E. MATHEWS,

E/50, V.I.

OF STARK CO., OHIO.

FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS, ON THE 20TH OF APRIL, AND HIS
ARRIVAL AT CHICAGO ON THE 28TH OF MAY, AFTER TRAVERS-
ING ON FOOT AND ALONE A DISTANCE OF OVER 800 MILES
ACROSS THE STATES OF LOUISIANA, ARKANSAS AND
MISSOURI, BY THE MOST UNFREQUENTED ROUTES;
TOGETHER WITH INTERESTING DESCRIPTIONS
OF MEN AND THINGS; OF WHAT HE SAW
AND HEARD; APPEARANCE OF THE
~~COUNTRY, HABITS~~ OF THE
PEOPLE, &C., &C., &C.

1861.

INTRODUCTION.

TO THE PUBLIC.

The undersigned, at the solicitation of many friends, has been induced to publish an account of his exodus from the South after the breaking out of the war between the United States and the so called Confederate States. In doing so, his object has been mainly to subserve the cause of truth and justice, and with no feelings of revenge or ill will towards those at whose hands he has severely suffered on account of a local prejudice. He will therefore give a "round unvarnished tale." composed of facts, and leave each reader to draw his own conclusions therefrom. And if, in these few pages, his object is accomplished, he will be more than compensated for the sufferings endured and the labor performed.

ALFRED E. MATHEWS.

July, 1861.

E. H. Mathews

A JOURNAL

OF THE FLIGHT OF

ALFRED E. MATHEWS FROM TEXAS.

FOR more than one year previous to the close of the year 1860, I had been residing in Tuscaloosa county, Alabama ; and when the secession movement broke out, was teaching school in the northern part of the county. At that time a few of the leading secessionists of the place, (New Lexington,) met and organized a military company to defend the rights of the South, as they said. My name was put on the list without consulting me, and I was then informed that it was my duty to assist in "defending the rights of the South," and that if I did not comply, I would be tried by a court-martial, and fined not less than five dollars for each time I refused or neglected to attend drill. I deemed it best to submit at first, until I could leave, and "mustered" with them during the first two regular drills. The company consisted of about seventy-five men ; and would make good soldiers under competent officers, if they all kept sober, which was not the case. The captain was the only officer who did not get too drunk to walk straight or talk sensibly ; so that matters were pretty badly mixed up, and I think I knew about as much at the end of the last drill as I did before commencing, which was doubtless the case with nearly all the rest of them. The captain was a fine

officer, and had some military experience, but the men did not pay strict attention, nor were they under proper discipline.

I was one of the clerks of the election in the precinct of New Lexington to elect commissioners to the Montgomery convention, to vote for or against the secession ordinance. The election was quietly and fairly conducted, and a majority of the votes cast were for the Union candidates. All the Union candidates that were elected throughout the State were slaveholders, and many of them voted for secession in the convention.

I had been in the habit of taking a walk every morning after breakfast, and on Friday, December 28th, started as usual to walk, but continued it somewhat longer than on ordinary occasions; in fact I kept on walking until I got out of the State; but in doing so, was obliged to leave all the property I had acquired while in the South, besides not being able to get the school money due me, as it was proposed to appropriate the school fund for military purposes. About noon it commenced raining, and continued all afternoon and night, causing the streams to overflow the low bottom lands in many places as much as three feet; so that the next day, Saturday, I had much deep water to wade through, which not only impeded my progress, but made traveling extremely unpleasant.

While passing a planter's house in the northern part of Pickens county, on Saturday morning, the owner, followed by a young man, (his son, no doubt,) came out and stopped me. He questioned me closely; asking where I was from and which way I was going. I told him I was from Tuscaloosa county, and going to Columbus. He found I was well acquainted with that part of the South, and with many of the citizens of Tuscaloosa, and supposed me to be a Southern man. I got a drink of water and resumed my journey.

I regarded it as a lucky accident that I found places to stay at night. On Saturday night I stopped at the house of a portly planter, a secessionist, (of course I did not let him know my politics or destination,) from whom I learned that a gentleman in his neighborhood, who had been there some time teaching singing school, was seized, since the secession excitement, by the secessionists, who accused him of being a Northern man, and

were about to administer some severe punishment for the crime ; but he declared he was from Tennessee, and said he could get letters from there to prove he was a good Southern man, which he did, and was not further molested.

At that time it was everywhere unpleasant, and in many places dangerous in the country, for Northern men to live, unless they had become identified with the people ; but in the large towns and cities this did not seem to be the case, especially if they were engaged in some business. But Northern teachers and agents, more especially if new comers, were at all times objects of suspicion ; while Northern mechanics were free from this inconvenience.

On Saturday night and Sunday morning there was a severe snow storm from the north. Traveling through mud, water and snow, I reached Columbus, Mississippi, on Sunday morning, and stopped at Cady's Hotel. On Monday I applied to Mr. ———, the editor of a secession paper, for a situation in his office. He no doubt considered the fact of my applying for a situation in a secession office good proof that I was a secessionist. He was very glad to have my services, and never questioned my politics. I resolved to stay no longer than necessary to get money sufficient to take me out of the "Southern Confederacy," as it was then called.

Columbus is one of the largest cities in Mississippi, and is a beautiful place ; many of the private residences are quite handsome. Indeed it is only in and near the large towns and cities of the South that one sees taste and neatness displayed in the dwelling houses. The city of Columbus is in reality owned by the township and not by private individuals. It is located on a school section, and the trustees have not the power to sell, but only to lease to builders ; and yet there are many persons there who have built dwellings who do not understand the nature of the piece of paper called a deed, they get in exchange for their money.

The office in which I was engaged, was head quarters for the leading secessionists of Columbus, and I had an excellent opportunity of hearing and seeing all that was going on among them, and of knowing their sentiments and expectations. At that time it was the prevailing opinion throughout the South, that they

would be assisted in their scheme of rebellion, by many of the Northern people.

Colonel —, a wealthy secessionist, of more influence perhaps than any other man in Columbus, came up to the office one night much excited, and told the editor that two New York drummers had just arrived in the city that day, and that he had intended to have given them a coat of tar and feathers, but while collecting a company for that purpose, they made their escape. The crime they were guilty of was trying to collect of Columbus merchants debts due to New York wholesale houses.

There were a great many Northern men in Columbus; some of them had been residing in the place a number of years. One night some of the leading secessionists, including Col. —, met in the office, and while there discussed the propriety of "running the Yankees out of town." The offence of which they were guilty, was *not* taking part in the rebellion. The secessionists did not then come to a conclusion in reference to the matter. The feeling against Northern people was not as severe at that time as it has since become.

Business was very dull in Columbus. Many of the white mechanics had nothing to do, and there was a great deal of suffering among them. Most of what little work was to be done was given to negro mechanics. An intelligent carpenter, an acquaintance of one of the persons in the office where I was engaged, came up one day and told his friend that his family were suffering for provisions; he had no money, and could not get work at anything. He assured me this was the case with others of his acquaintance.

Up to this time, Columbus furnished four companies of soldiers; most of them had gone to Ft. Pickens, and the rest left for that place soon after I arrived. These were some of the finest equipped and drilled rebels I saw in the South, and yet they would not compare with most of our soldiers.

I remained here but a few weeks; and as it was still mid-winter, did not consider it advisable to return northward until spring. Not thinking at the time that Texas would secede, I determined to go there and remain at least until spring; and accordingly took passage on a Mobile boat, on my way to that State. On

reaching Mobile I found a packet just ready to leave for New Orleans, on which I took passage, and arrived in that city at an early hour the following morning, Tuesday, 12th, and immediately procured a boarding house, intending to remain a few days.

While in New Orleans, I witnessed an interesting celebration. All the Military were out, and they had what every one said was a great military parade. At night the city was beautifully illuminated; and an artillery company was posted at the foot of one of the principal streets, and displayed their skill by firing cannon in quick succession.

There was great distress among the laboring classes of the city even at this early stage of the rebellion. Immense quantities of corn, flour, pork, &c., were daily arriving from the North, and being shipped to different parts of the South, and stored in warehouses in the city. Thousands of bushels of grain, and large stacks of bacon, were piled up along the levee, which gradually disappeared to give place to other piles equally as large.

In the cotton states everything seems to be neglected but cotton. Grain, fruit and vegetables receive but little attention; partly, no doubt, because the climate is unfavorable, and partly because the people are too negligent and dilatory to take the trouble that would be necessary. This year they are making preparations to put out more corn than usual. The most marked difference between this country and the North, is the absence of grass and clover. We here miss the fields of grass and grain, that are so beautiful during spring and summer in the Northern States.

After remaining in New Orleans one week I took a Red River packet for Texas, and landed at Shreveport, La., on the 24th of February, and went over to Carthage, Texas, fifty miles from Shreveport, and engaged in business. The country was more quiet than a few weeks before, and continued so for some time.

Eastern Texas has mostly a loose, white, sandy soil, with a heavy growth of yellow pine, and is said to be quite productive in places; but its richness is not very lasting. The land along Trinity river, and some other large streams, is of a much better quality. No grass or clover, either wild or tame, thrives in this part of Texas; and the cattle feed entirely on browse; on this

account they require a wide range, and frequently stray off and are lost. A bitter weed, resembling grass at a short distance, grows here very plentifully, upon which cows feed, making their milk taste like quinine. The butter, however, does not partake of this taste. In western Texas the prairie grass affords excellent pasture, and here stock raising is quite profitable; but this kind of grass soon dies out when much trampled upon by cattle, and no other kind will grow in this latitude.

I saw but very few apple and peach, and no other fruit trees; they do not succeed well here. Grapes are the only kind of fruit that can be cultivated with profit, and the cultivation of them is altogether neglected.

Garden vegetables will not grow here, or else their cultivation is entirely ignored. Perhaps both causes contribute to banish them from the table.

In southern and central Texas, cotton is the only profitable crop; in northern Texas, wheat does well. Last year there was an entire failure of corn and wheat, and not more than one-fourth of a crop of cotton "made;" so that the State was drained of money to purchase provisions. There was comparatively no money in the country—no circulating medium; business was carried on by making "arrangements." Dry seasons are of frequent occurrence in Texas.

I was one afternoon conversing with one of the editors of the Carthage paper, when a thin visaged man came in and remained a few minutes to transact some business about his subscription. He had scarcely got out of hearing when the editor commenced laughing heartily. I asked him what was the fun; he told me that the gentleman who had just gone out, was a minister of the gospel, and that he was very much troubled with the dyspepsia, and always carried a paper of soda to take a little to relieve him; that last summer he went down into Shelby county, and as he expected to stop a few days, took a large paper of soda with him; and while there, being a stranger, he was arrested by a vigilance committee. On searching him they found this soda, and supposing it to be poison with which he intended to poison their wells, they made him eat every bit of it. Of course so large a dose made the poor fellow very sick.

When the news of the bombardment of Fort Sumter reached Texas, the feeling against Northern men became very bitter; and it was not only very unpleasant, but dangerous for Northern men to remain in the country. All those who were not for them, were considered against them. I immediately resolved to leave Carthage, intending to go to Galveston, and there take a vessel to New York. Many of the stage routes in that part of Texas were discontinued, and I had at least to commence the journey on foot.

Saturday, April 20th, 1861. Started at rather a late hour, taking the road to Henderson. After leaving the immediate vicinity of Carthage, I traveled through a continuous forest, until within three miles of Henderson. Stop to-night at a planter's house two miles east of that town. Distance traveled, 25 miles.

Sunday, 21st.—As there is no Sunday for travelers in Texas, I continued my journey. Henderson was the first town I came to after leaving Carthage. This is one of the towns in eastern Texas that was burned last summer, as they said, by Northern Abolitionists, but in reality by their own people. Before the fire Henderson was a handsome town, beautifully located; but now all the best part is in ruins. Here, while contemplating these ruins, I could not help thinking of the flagrant outrage committed by the Southern press and people, against the North. All of the numerous insurrections that occur in the South, are charged against the Northern people; and yet, in nearly every instance they are instigated by their own people, in revenge for wrongs they endure on account of slavery. I have seen white mechanics obliged to stand aside while their families were suffering for the necessities of life, when negro mechanics, owned by rich and influential men, could get plenty of work; and I have heard these same white mechanics breathe the most bitter curses against the institution of slavery and the slave aristocracy. Is it a wonder there are so many negro insurrections in the south?

After leaving Henderson, the country is very thinly inhabited; and here I find it necessary to "camp out" at night, building a fire by which to keep warm; for, however warm it may be during the day, the nights are always cool in Texas, especially this time of the year. As I am unused to labor or violent exercise, it is

advisable not to tax myself too much at first. Camp on a hill in the west part of Rusk county. Distance traveled, 17 miles.

Monday, 22d.—The soil to-day appears richer than that I passed over the two days previous; and near the middle of the day the road led through a small settlement, with some good sized plantations. The cattle I saw in the forest were as wild as the deer that darted across my path. They will not allow any one to approach them unless on horseback. Camp to-night in a pleasant valley 21 miles from last camping place.

Tuesday, 23d.—The streams in this part of Texas are not very large or numerous. Most of the timber is yellow pine. While crossing a swamp a large black snake came bounding over logs and under-brush directly towards me, I struck it with a stout stick while in the act of springing, after which it was soon dispatched. It was, doubtless, in pursuit of something when I crossed its path; for I frequently see serpents of different kinds, and they nearly always try to avoid me. Distance traveled, 19 miles.

Wednesday 24th.—To-day most of the timber is yellow pine of a very fine growth. Reached Palestine late at night, and stopped at the Hunter house. I had provided myself with cold meat and bread before starting, some of which is still left. The people here are very much excited over the President's Proclamation, which they have just received.

While traveling through this country I have been frequently stopped and questioned; and it becomes quite apparent that further southward, in that part of the country occupied by large plantations, I will run some risk. For this reason it is advisable for me to alter my course. Self-constituted vigilance committees are numerous, who make it their business to stop travelers and hang Union men. As yet, no cases of violence have come to my knowledge, but the threats against Union men are loud and terrible. It is only by exercising great prudence and courage that Northern men can travel through their neighborhoods, which are so seldom visited by strangers. On the large public thoroughfares this inconvenience and danger is not felt; but the deranged condition of affairs is the cause of greatly increasing the fare; and in some instances, on the lower Mississippi river, travelers

have been made to pay their fare two or three times over. The high rates make it impossible for me to avail myself of any other mode of traveling other than on foot, even should the opportunity offer. But I am several hundred miles from the Mississippi river, and nearly as far from the Gulf, and still farther from a railroad leading Northward; and by going to either, would be obliged to travel through the most dangerous part of the country. The safest and most practicable route for me to take in order to reach the free States, is by way of the wilderness of Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri, which must be performed on foot.

It is an easy matter for persons who sympathize with the South, and have letters of recommendation from some of their friends here to travel in this country; and this is the case with nearly all the travelers of Northern birth.

In taking this route, it will be necessary for me to retrace my steps, passing through Shreveport; but I will do so by another route that is less dangerous, as it will lead through that part of eastern Texas inhabited principally by Spaniards and Mexicans.

Thursday, 25th.—The country over which I traveled to-day was uninhabited for miles; a great deal of the soil is sandy and barren. The trees are principally yellow pine and oak of a small size. Here I saw many very beautiful varieties of wild flowers; brilliant in color, and delicate in texture. They surpass anything of the kind I have ever before seen. Stay to-night at a farm house or cabin eight miles from Crockett. Distance traveled 32 miles. Most of the way I was obliged to walk through deep sand, and am very much fatigued in consequence.

Friday, 26th.—This morning reached Crockett about 10 o'clock. This is the county seat of Houston county and is a small but neat town. Most of the people were at church, listening to a secession speech in favor of raising funds to buy horses, clothing, &c., for a company of rangers of that county. I remained here only a few minutes, and then took the Nacogdoches road. For the first few miles after leaving Crockett, the country was partially cultivated. Towards evening it rained quite hard; and after walking two miles in the rain and mud, I stopped at the residence of a farmer in pretty good circumstances. He owns a saw and grist mill, and quite a large tract of land, together with a great

many cattle. The house is a small cabin, built of round logs, without a single window; the only place to admit light, besides the door, (which is always open winter or summer,) is a small loop-hole near the mud chimney. A sort of shed is attached to it that serves for a bed room. The furniture consists of little else than a few broken split-bottom chairs and a very rickety table. Two or three half naked and very dirty children are playing in the ashes of the ample fire-place. Everything is in the greatest disorder, and extremely filthy. The table was in keeping with the rest. But this is only a description of the manner in which many of the people in the South and South West live. They endure great inconvenience on account of the unfavorable nature of the climate; it being difficult to keep meat, bread, pastry, fruits, milk, butter, etc. On this account they are deprived of most of the little necessities and luxuries of the table, which are so common in the North; and they do not even attempt to keep bread, meat, pastry or sauce, from one meal to the other. Cellars would be of no use, being too damp and warm. People living in cities accessible by steamboats, can have the benefit of ice, and the wealthy classes there live much better; but too little attention is everywhere paid to those small household comforts and conveniences which contribute so much to the health and enjoyment of the family. The furnishing and adornment of the house is as much neglected as are the necessities and luxuries of the table. Distance traveled 27 miles.

Saturday, 27th,—To-day I had considerable mud and water to wade through in the low lands, and experienced some delay in crossing small streams that are very high from last night's rain. In the afternoon passed some fine plantations, and a small village in the south-eastern part of Rusk county. Stop to-night at Mr. W——'s a person of wealth and popularity. His residence is the finest I have seen in Texas. From conversation with Mrs. W. I infer they are opposed to the war. Just before supper, two rebel soldiers came for the purpose of inducing his son to join their company. They used every argument to induce him to consent to join them, but without effect, for his father could not well spare him. He said the Democrats had brought about the war, and ought to do all the fighting. They at last said he was

a coward; this was touching him in a tender spot, and he no longer refused to go with them, In this way many young men are forced to join the rebel ranks, who do not think the war a just one on the part of the South. 24 miles.

Sunday, 28th.—I got an early start, for as there was no chance of getting breakfast before 8 or 9 o'clock, I left without it. One mile from Mr. W's, I crossed a large creek by the ferry, but had to wade in mud and water for some distance through the swamp after crossing. To-day a Spanish gentleman invited me to take dinner with him. There was much more neatness and taste displayed in and about his residence, and the house itself was better furnished than any other I have been inside of during my sojourn here; and the table, too, was better provided for. The ladies of his household were quite intelligent, refined and polite. The old gentleman seemed very much depressed by the sad condition the secessionists had brought the country to. He said but little. It was here I first learned with delight, of the unanimous Union sentiment in the North.

In the afternoon reached Nacogdoches, and spent an hour there. It is a small but neat town, and is inhabited principally by Spaniards and Mexicans, as is also the county, which has the same name. An attempt was here made to raise a volunteer company, but without success. It is a strong Union county. The Spanish residents I find are courteous and gentlemanly; their houses, too, are more comfortable than the Americans, and their gardens are arranged with better taste. They seem better prepared to enjoy the comforts of home. Disunion finds little encouragement among them. Last month a disastrous flood swept away much valuable property in the county. In some instances, I am told, entire plantations were carried off or permanently injured by being in many places covered with gravel. Texas is noted for dry summers and severe storms. Put up to-night at a small farm house, after wading through sand ankle-deep, for a distance of four miles. 23 miles.

Monday, 29th. The country to-day was uninhabited, and the soil poor. Towards evening, however, I reached a settlement, and stopped at an early hour. I found great difficulty in keeping the right direction, as it was cloudy and there was no road to

guide me during most of the way. It seems I missed the road usually traveled, which is quite dim. Wild flowers were numerous in variety, and very beautiful. I tried to get the seed of a few kinds, but found none ripe. Distance traveled, 28 miles.

Tuesday, 30th.—The country is still very thinly inhabited. Was very sick to-day, and had to lie down in the pine forest most of the afternoon, and suffered for want of water; but in the evening got up and walked four miles to a farm house where I am stopping for the night. Mr. T.—, the gentleman who lives here, keeps a small store, which is on the opposite side of the road. He is apparently wealthy, and owns two plantations. His brother I have before heard of as one of the wealthiest men in eastern Texas. I had a long conversation with Mr. T. He says he read Mr. Lincoln's Message, and had no fault to find with it; he would as soon live under his Administration as any other; and thinks the present attitude of the South uncalled for. He conversed with me freely because I had also expressed Union sentiments. Nearly all the persons with whom I have staid for the last few nights I judge to be Union men. 15 miles.

Wednesday, May 1st.—The road to-day was through a richer part of the country, and pretty thickly inhabited for Texas. Crossed the Louisiana line in the afternoon, and to night stop at a plantation residence 21 miles south-west of Shreveport. Rain most of the afternoon. Distance traveled, 25 miles.

Tuesday, 2d. Rain continued during the fore part of the day. I reached Shreveport about 3 o'clock. Business in this city is entirely prostrated; many of the stores and other places of business are closed, and it seems like a city of mourning. Numbers of the people here, as in other parts of the South, seem appalled at the effects of secession. Six rebel companies have left this place; most of the men, however, were from the country around, and from some of the counties in Texas. Their destination, I am told, is Virginia, where Southern troops are collecting, they said, to "take Washington." I find great enthusiasm in the Southern rebellion, existing among church members in localities where there are large plantations and many slaves.

Crops everywhere look promising; corn is said to be out of danger, although it is yet quite small. I here crossed Red Riv-

er, and my way is up that stream, The soil in this bottom is very rich, and the plantations are large. Corn here is unusually promising, and is about two feet high. More of it was planted than usual. Cotton is just up. I saw several large "gangs" of slaves in the fields at work ; some of the women were quadroons, and were quite pretty. I found it impossible to get the privilege of staying at any of the plantations, or even to get anything to eat, although I have money to pay for either. The air to-night is very damp and chilly, and the ground wet in consequence of the rain. The dead drift along the river banks emits an unpleasant odor. I am without matches, and will have to do without a fire. Stop for the night seven miles from Shreveport. The ground is very muddy. Distance, traveled, 28 miles.

Friday, 3d.—Last night I had to lie shivering (for sleep was out of the question) without a fire ; and so I got up this morning about 1 or 2 o'clock and resumed my walk on the levee. Long before there was any sign of daylight I could see the torches moving about in the negro quarters ; the drivers were arousing the slaves to go to their work. I tried again to purchase something to eat, but without success, and had to make up for the deficiency by drinking bad water. Late in the day I found a small tavern in the forest, where I got a meal. While there the landlady amused me by reciting the news afloat in the neighborhood. She told me with great earnestness, that Mr. Lincoln kept himself shut up in an iron cage and did not allow any one but Mrs. Lincoln and Mr. Seward to see him, because, she said, he was afraid of being killed. She told me also, that the United States army was coming down for the purpose of liberating their slaves, but she felt confident they would be completely whipped. She told me many other things concerning the Northern people, that were equally as absurd, all of which she firmly believed herself. Towards night I succeeded in getting a little coarse, musty corn meal, and made some cakes and baked them in the ashes of my camp-fire ; they are not very palatable, even to a hungry traveler. Reached the high lands where the soil is poor and country uninhabited. Camp, 32 miles from last.

There is a pool of cool, clear water near my camp, formed by a small brook, overshadowed and darkened by dense foliage,

where I was bathing my feet without at first noticing a serpent with open mouth, and large fangs, that was coiled up within three feet. I had a stick near, with which I wounded it in the head, leaving it apparently dead. It was of a dusky brown color, and had a large flat head. I will examine it in the morning, when lighter.

Saturday 4th.—I was awakened this morning by the rain falling on my face. It continued raining most of the day, obliging me to wade through a great deal of water in low places. The snake I left for dead yesterday evening, was gone. Purchased a pound of sugar for 20 ets., and a few almonds, at a place called Conway; nothing else to be had. The town consisted of a store and a deserted black-smith shop. Camp in a piney-forest; trees of a very large size. Distance 27 miles.

The wild beasts howl unusually loud to-night, around my camp. They are, no doubt, catamounts and wolves; but they will not venture near enough to the fire for me to tell. In this wilderness are also a few bears and panthers, but they are seldom seen. How I wish I possessed the skill of a poet that I might aptly describe the wild grandeur of the scene. I feel more security here than when in the settled parts of the country, and can lie down by a blazing fire and sleep with—I was going to say comfort, but that is not the case, for the musquitos and other more poisonous insects will not let me rest. I fear and dread them more than I do the wolves and catamounts who will not approach the fire.

Sunday, 5th.—Most of the country here is covered with pine; in some places oak is the prevailing timber. The soil is poor, except in a few spots, and there is scarcely any signs of civilization. In the afternoon, came to a farm house where I stopped a short time. I always avoid, if possible, stopping at the residences of slave owners, which I know by the negro cabins or quarters—they are generally secessionists; but non-slave owners I find nearly always to be either indifferent on the subject, or possessing Union sentiments, but they never express them except in their own homes, or to persons they knew to be Union men. The people here informed me that three men who had lived in their neighborhood, were hung by the regulators a short dis-

tance west of that place, while searching for lost cattle. It seems that when the regulators came up to them, they were lost in the woods, and in their confusion could not give such an account of themselves as was deemed satisfactory to their captors. About noon, came through a little place called Louisville. Distance, 27 miles.

Monday, 6th.—A description of the face of the country traveled through one day, will answer for most others. I always started at an early hour, about 3 a. m., and rested an hour or two in the middle of the day, sleeping in the shade of the tall pines. The deep sand I found in many parts of Texas, that fatigued me so much, is here exchanged for swamps and low lands covered with water. The spring is unusually wet. The days are always hot and oppressive, and the nights damp and chilly, sometimes cold; and although I sleep with a light overcoat on, frequently get cold at night, and wake at short intervals to throw a few pine knots on the declining embers. My overcoat, and satchel containing a few articles of clothing and a little corn meal, seem to get heavier as the day advances. They fatigue me much in carrying.

At noon I reached Washington, Arkansas, and took dinner at the hotel. The country around for three or four miles is composed of plantations and farms, and a little of the land is improved. The town is very pretty, (the trees make it so,) and for Arkansas, is a large place, but in Ohio it would be a small village. This county has furnished one company of about 60 men; they left two days before I arrived. I remained here an hour. While passing a plantation about three miles from Washington, two men came out of the house and insolently questioned me as to my destination and place of residence. All the authority or warrant they had, was that of superior numbers; their companions remained near the gate. I did not gratify them by relating my full intentions. I gave them my last place of residence, and told them I was going to Arkadelphia. They then went back to the house and I continued my walk.

Fifteen miles north-east of Washington I came to the Little Missouri Valley, and after going through the swamp, a distance of five miles, by an unfrequented track, came to the river just at

dusk; and collecting some dry wood, soon had a blazing fire. The air is very damp and chilly. Near this place is a rude slab, in memory of a traveler who was murdered on the spot last year for his money. Distance traveled, 35 miles.

Just as I was about to stretch myself on the ground for the night, a man dressed in the uniform of a rebel soldier, came within a few rods of my fire, and asked permission to approach, which I granted. He said that he was trying to overtake his company, who were on their way to Little Rock, there to join the regiment at that place, when they were to go to Virginia, as he said to take Washington. He had remained behind to make some provision for his family. He had no matches to light a fire, nor anything to eat, and it was too dark to cross the river. He gladly accepted my invitation to stay by my camp-fire, and partake of my scanty fare. He said he did not know what he should have done if he had not seen my fire, as it brightly shone and guided his steps through the dark and dismal swamp. He told me the reason he volunteered was because he believed Lincoln intended to free all the slaves, and then establish a monarchical government; he had been told so by responsible men, and firmly believed it. I told him these reports were all false, that Mr. Lincoln had no such intentions; and our conversation then turned upon other subjects.

Tuesday, 7th.—This morning we forded the river as soon as it was light enough to see. While waiting for daylight, I boiled some rice in a tin cup, which we had for breakfast. I procured two pounds at Lewisville. I find it impossible to carry much besides the few articles which I am obliged to retain. The soldier continued with me for about 15 miles, when we reached a settlement where he got a horse in order to overtake his company before night. This part of the State is a little thicker settled than it has been for most of the distance heretofore; but I would rather it were a complete wilderness. To-night my place of camping is on higher ground, under the tall pines; it is more pleasant than in swamps, which are always damp and chilly, and full of unpleasant odors. I call it camping but that is too respectable a name for the way in which I spend the nights. I build a fire of pine knots and chunks, which are profusely scat-

tered around ; always collecting a lot of them with which to replenish the fire during the night. If I have anything to eat, (which is not always the case) I eat it, and then stretch myself on the mud or sand as the case may be, with feet to the fire, and soon drop off into an uneasy slumber, like a watch-dog, with one eye and ear open, while the incessant din made by the denizens of the forest, is ringing in my ears. Distance, 35 miles.

Wednesday, 8th.—This forenoon I reached Arkadelphia; and here I saw the company to which the soldier belonged who staid with me Monday night. It seems he had informed his captain of my having contradicted the lies which he, in his ignorance, so firmly believed. It being within the corporation limits of Arkadelphia, the soldiers could not arrest me on their own responsibility; but had previously made the necessary arrangements to have me taken in hand by the city authorities; so that as soon as I reached the place, I was accosted by a military officer of the town, who said I was a prisoner. He delivered me into the hands of the city marshal, who took me into the court room, which was up stairs, for safe keeping. Being very hungry, I told the marshal I would like to get something to eat, and he went with me to a grocery where I purchased a few cakes; but as they were then ready for the trial, I had no time to eat. After calling the court to order the soldier was sworn and examined, but as he did not adhere strictly to the facts, it gave me the opportunity to deny the correctness of what he said. After examining the soldier, one of those present made a short speech, alluding to Abolitionists, and the necessity of caution on the part of the South. Here some one in the back part of the room, said that if I was from Connecticut I must be hung; he thought I was from that State. I was then permitted to say a few words. I told them I thought they were acting very ridiculous; that their witness was so much excited then, and had been while with me, that he did not know what he was about, or what was said to him. I then, by questioning him made him admit actions that proved he was absent minded, and forgot things that were given to his charge. I told them I had always been in the habit of minding my own business, and thought it a hard case if a person under such circumstances could not travel unmolested. The wit-

ness was then dismissed, the court room cleared, and they minutely examined the contents of my satchel, and also my coat-lining. They wished to know how I was regarded where I lived in Texas, and I showed them a personal notice in a Texas paper, which seemed to produce a favorable impression. I was then conducted out of the room while my fate was being decided. I thought this a good opportunity to dispatch the cakes which I had put in my pocket; for if I was liberated I would then lose no time by stopping to eat; and if hung, I would not go on a long journey hungry. In a few minutes I was recalled and liberated, and my satchel and overcoat handed back. An old gentleman privately told me that I was still in danger of being hung by the Washington company; he advised me to get out of their way; he told me what route to take in order to avoid them.

As it was necessary for me to follow a public road for four miles, I secreted myself on the side of a hill or small mountain near town, from which I could see the soldiers passing and re-passing, and when the road became clear I moved on again; keeping a sharp lookout in order to fall back into the woods if they should approach. Four miles from Arkadelphia I crossed a fork of the Washita river, and took a left hand road, which was quite unfrequented. Seeing a small cabin in the centre of a cultivated patch of ground, I went over to it, and found it occupied by an old widow lady with a son and daughter. The young man was about 24 years of age. He told me that the last election for secession was conducted secretly or else Arkansas would have been for the Union, stronger than ever. I stopped but a few minutes. The road soon branched out into numerous cattle tracks, which only served to bewilder me. I kept a northerly course regardless of them, and camped in this rocky and mountainous wilderness after accomplishing but 15 miles.

Thursday, 9th.—I arose at an early hour, and boiled some rice for breakfast before daylight. Followed an old untrodden road in the morning, which kept a northerly course; but at the foot of a small mountain I lost it. I continued to the top of the mountain, when another appeared immediately before me still larger, with a deep valley between. In this way I crossed four mountain ridges running east and west, each larger than its pre-

decessor, thinking every one to be the last. The sides of them were rugged, very steep, and covered with a small, tough, vine-like weed, which concealed the loose rocks and made my progress slow and hazardous. When on the summit of the fourth ridge, a long narrow valley, running east and west, with another ridge beyond, was again before me. I was in despair; but pressed on down the steep, frequently falling and rolling over. In this valley, as in all the others, is a mountain torrent of considerable size from the late heavy rain, which I had to ford. The water was very clear. Most of the rocks over which they ran were a rotten slate. Near the stream I found a road, which followed the course of the valley. I knew it led to Hot Springs, through which place I wished to go; but which section of the road must I take? I followed its eastward course for a mile, when it seemed to bear a little too much to the south; so I turned around and followed its westward course four or five miles, when it doubled the mountain and led off south. I then knew I was right at first, and turned and retraced my steps. I had the same creek to wade several times. I here met a young man and his wife going south. I was surprised and delighted to see any one in this wild region. We sat down in the shade to rest and converse. Our conversation naturally led to the war, when he said they (the secessionists) wanted him to join them, but he "was not going to fight for their niggers."

The timber in the valleys here is of various kinds, but principally pine; the mountains are scantily covered with pine and oak trees, that decrease in size towards their summits. There is a coarse mountain grass in some places, rather scattered and scanty in growth, but it is the first grass of any kind worthy the name, that I have seen for two years, although I have traveled much through the South during that time. I felt grateful for it when I thought of the deer that so often bounded through the woods at my approach.

Soon after reaching the place where I first struck the road, it gradually turned towards the North; and I soon came to the Washita river, and crossed it in a canoe kept by a family who lived near by and cultivated a small piece of land. Near the ferry I saw an old gentleman who seemed quite intelligent. He

was very indignant towards the political leaders of the State for conducting the election secretly.

My Camp to-night is at the foot of the mountains. The pines here are unusually fine ; many of them 60 feet in height from the ground to the first branches, and will average $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter for that length. The tempest is raging fearfully in the mountains ; and the wind rushes through the tall pines with a deafening roar ; the lightning is very vivid and frequent ; and the peals of thunder sound like heavy artillery as they reverberate through the mountain gorge. To-night I felt more terror and dismay on discovering that I had but one match, and that not a very good kind, than I have heretofore on this journey. What would I do if it failed, or the wind blew it out ? By extreme caution I succeeded in igniting a few dry twigs and leaves, and now have a blazing fire of pine knots, that burn like tar. I have protected it as much as possible with chunks of dead timber, that it might not be put out by the torrent. Distance traveled, 36 miles. Distance accomplished 23.

Friday, 10th.—Passed through Hot Springs this morning. It is a small village in a wild and mountainous country ; most of the buildings are boarding-houses for invalids. The steam was rising from the boiling springs at the foot of the rocks. Saw and conversed with several farmers in the thinly inhabited country. The Union sentiment prevails. But they are men not used to taking part in politics. It would now be new to them—and they attend to the cultivation of their land. I stop to-night at a farm house just before going into another uninhabited region. Had many swollen streams to ford ; and was frequently led off the course by numerous forks, and winding roads. There is no road the direction I wish to go. I have been obliged to take a circuitous route in order to avoid the most dangerous part of the State. Distance traveled 29 miles. Distance accomplished, 24 miles.

Saturday, 11th.—My route to-day was down a narrow valley with two mountain ranges on each side. The country is uninhabited. This morning I crossed a small stream, scarcely perceptible among the rocks ; its course down the valley was winding ; and, as I advanced, it was increased rapidly in size by other streams from the mountains, until reaching the magnitude of a river. I

forded it many times through all its stages of size. Met two young men late in the day, with bundles on their backs; they said they were stage drivers. When they found out my destination they were quite free in expressing their Union sentiments. One of them denounced the disunionists in no very chaste language; they had barbarously treated one of his profession for being a Yankee. Camp to-night is in a low wet valley. More rain. Got some cornmeal at a small mill, early in the day, and a fish in one of the streams. This was a treat not looked for. I baked some cakes by the ashes, and boiled the fish in a tin cup. Distance, 26 miles.

Sunday, 12th.—Had several large creeks and rivers to ford to-day, and a disagreeable swamp to go through. Surface of the country still mountainous, with narrow valleys; soil, poor. Passed through Perryville about 3 o'clock. The town consists of two or three log cabins and a store; they have lumber there for a court house. Saw no signs of civilization for seven miles after leaving Perryville. Storm came up in the afternoon, and it has been raining quite hard ever since. Stay to-night in a log church occupied by a family. Their fare is not much better than is my own, except that they have bacon; this I cannot eat. Little else besides corn bread and bacon is used in the South West. This diet does not agree with me—I get weaker every day. True, I don't get enough of it to do me much harm; but then I can get nothing else. Distance traveled, 26 miles.

Monday, 13th.—Lewisburg is a secession strong hold. I had to avoid it. Crossed Arkansas River to-day at the ferry, in a canoe. Stopped a few minutes at Springfield; a small village of about 20 houses. Union sentiments prevail in this place. Stay to-night at a farm house near the town. Distance 20 miles.

Tuesday, 14th.—Country traveled through to-day almost uninhabited. Soil, poor and rocky. Timber principally oak; and stunted in growth. Had numerous streams to cross, most of them swollen to the magnitude of rivers by the recent and severe storms. The waters are everywhere high, and no bridges. Had great trouble in keeping the proper course, as I had to leave the road usually traveled, on account of high water. Stopped at a house to make some inquiries, where there were a number of wo-

men very much terrified ; they told me that a band of negroes had escaped and were in the mountains ; that they had been down in the valley last night and stole some provisions and clothing. The men from the neighborhood had gone to hunt them with blood-hounds, and the women had collected here for safety. They were too much agitated to give me any information in regard to the road, so I had to keep a northerly course regardless of the numerous cattle tracks, and faint, and seldom used neighborhood roads, that only confused me, and led in the wrong direction. Late in the afternoon got into a swamp where I found great difficulty in making my way, on account of the mud, water and tangled vines and briars ; but finally reached a deep sluggish, but narrow river ; and after wandering up and down, at last found a log on which I crossed, and came up the hill to my present camping ground. The night is very cold, and I miss the pine knots ; but have some dry, oak limbs. My provisions are as scanty as they are unpalatable and unwholesome, and I feel quite wornout and feeble ; my shoes too, are nearly dropping to pieces. If I had plenty of money and would put on a secession face, perhaps I could find some place to stay ; but then corn bread, bacon and muddy coffee are not fit for a person in my condition. Perhaps I would even then be worse off ; like a traveler in Missouri who stopped at a house where I boarded in a small village. He was very sick, but was neglected and charged an exorbitant price for board, although he ate but little ; and the "niggers" robbed him of a gold watch and other articles. Distance traveled 32 miles.

Wednesday, 15th.—Had an unusual number of bridgless streams to cross, and rugged and steep hills to climb. Came through some very fine pine forests. Distance, 30 miles.

Thursday, 16th.—In the morning, staid half an hour at a cabin to rest and converse with its occupants, a young man and his wife. The young man assured me there were many Union men in his neighborhood. Bought a little corn bread of them, but it is no better than my own. Corn bread is mixed with nothing but water ; generally, not even salt ; that would be a luxury. Reached White River bottom early in the afternoon. The river two or three days since was remarkably high ; higher,

I am told, than it has been for many years. Numbers of plantations are seriously injured ; the water is yet quite deep on some of them. I had great trouble in getting through to within half a mile of the river, and can go no farther, and am stopping with a pretty wealthy farmer, a strong Union man, (at home.) He has no field slaves but does the work himself, by the assistance of his sons ; they are now planting corn. The soil here is very rich ; and is excellent cotton land, although they tell me it does not succeed as well as in the Southern part of the State. Corn must be planted wider apart here than it is in Illinois or Ohio, and only about two stalks allowed to a hill, otherwise it will not yield well. Although this is a very rich soil, corn is not as productive here as it is farther north. The cultivation of fruits and vegetables is almost entirely neglected ; neither do they succeed so well as in a colder latitude. Distance 21 miles.

Friday, 17th.—I expected to have got near enough to the river to-day to cross ; but the water is still too high. I am very sick and have to lie on the damp ground, which is disagreeable ; there is everywhere such an unpleasant odor from the filth left by the flood. My body is getting sore from the bites of poisonous insects. I should go back to the farm house but the men are in the field, and these are a suspicious people ; it would not do. I will wait until they return from their work. If I tell them I am unwell they will be afraid to keep me over night.

Saturday, 18th.—I succeeded in getting to the river bank where there is a ferry, by which I crossed, but on this side had to wade through a deposite of slush nearly knee deep, before reaching the bluffs. Batesville is two miles from this ferry. It is a pretty place and of considerable size. Here I unexpectedly saw a company of soldiers, and was agreeably surprised they did not arrest me. The soldiers of the South West are much finer, or rather more able bodied, than those of the South and South East ; but are not well disciplined. Most of the Southern soldiers are recruited from the wealthy classes ; and are made up principally of planter's sons, clerks, and young doctors and lawyers of which there is a large supply. They are brave and daring, but are more or less enervated by a hot climate and dissipation. They are unused to labor and will not stand the shock

of a charge in battle as well as Northern troops. Many of them are very young. Those soldiers from the poorer classes are more hardy and able bodied, but most of them do not feel the enthusiasm which is felt by those who own slaves or are dependent upon slavery. The numerous and very absurd stories about the cruelties and outrages committed by Northern troops, has had the effect of greatly increasing the secession army. These ridiculous lies go uncontradicted, and would silence and render powerless the Union sentiment, even if it was not suppressed by fear. It is everywhere circulated, and believed by many ignorant ones, that Southern travelers in the North are murdered in bed at night; that the Northern troops are committing outrages upon the persons of defenceless citizens in Missouri and Virginia—plundering their property, ravishing their women and murdering their children. The object of circulating these infamous slanders is to strengthen their ranks. The Union sentiment is fast dying out in consequence; and innocent Northern men are in danger of being hung by secessionists, and are avoided by Union men.

The country after leaving Batesville, is pretty well inhabited. I found so many small neighborhood roads that I got off the road, by which I lost four miles; but this is an every day occurrence, and I take it as a matter of course. This evening I stopped at a small cabin, and conversed some time with the gentleman who lives there. He is intelligent and well informed; was born and raised in Alabama. He told me one of his neighbors lately went down to Batesville, and while there said he was still for the Union, whereupon the secessionists arrested him, and were about to hang him, but many of his friends were in town, and interfered, declaring that if they did not let him go they would bring the entire country down and burn the place. They reluctantly released him. This gentleman assured me that three precincts in that part of the county were unanimously for the Union; but as the election had been conducted secretly, they had not voted. He regarded the war as a war for the extension of slavery; and said if Lincoln would send an army through that part of the State, he would get plenty of volunteers. I stay to-night at a farm house 10 miles from Batesville. Small

streams are now getting much lower, so that I am not so often delayed by them, and can rest occasionally ; but I was delayed several hours in crossing White river, and getting through the bottom, this morning. Distance traveled, 18 miles ; distance accomplished, 13 miles.

Sunday, 19th.—Reached Smithville late in the day, and being very tired and sick, sat down on the corner of the square, when I was instantly closely surrounded by a company of about 50 soldiers ; some of them were armed with rifles and shot guns, and a few with pistols. They were a guerilla-looking set of men ; some of them partly intoxicated. One of their number who had a sword by his side, came up and seizing me by the arm, said I was his prisoner. He was an officer ; and was pretty drunk. They then conducted me into a drinking saloon, and examined the contents of my satchel. I thought it advisable to show them the personal notice in the Texas secession paper. While residing in Texas I gave instruction, gratis, to a small flute and string band, which was organized for our own amusement ; and one evening we serenaded one of the proprietors of the Carthage paper, for which he gave us a complimentary notice. The name corresponded with the name in my tax receipts, they said, and I was “all right.” They told me they had a lot of “niggers” and a white man prisoners, on suspicion, in the court house. I saw some of their number pacing round the building, on guard. I forgot about my being sick, and walked quite briskly for three miles, where I now stop for the night, at a farm house. The people here tell me that in Jackson county there has lately been a large negro insurrection. Distance traveled, 28 miles.

Monday, 20th.—Staid a few minutes in Pocahontas. Business was much prostrated. Their news-paper was about to be discontinued. I here heard of several persons who where hung in that part of the State. One young man south-west of the place, I learn, was killed for refusing to volunteer. Stop to-night at a farm house north of Pocahontas. “Mein host” is a secessionist ; he appears to be afraid and suspicious of me. He no doubt thinks I have companions on the road. He has heard awful stories about the government troops at St. Louis. Distance, 29 miles.

Tuesday, 21st.—The country to-day is more unsettled and wild. Met nine wagons loaded with lead, soon after crossing into Missouri. They were whipping up the tired oxen in a great hurry; they were afraid the Government troops were after them. It is now difficult and painful for me to travel, especially in the mornings when first starting. Stay to-night at a small cabin; the people are very poor. Distance, 22 miles.

Wednesday, 22d.—As my money is now gone I made the people with whom I lodged a present this morning, for which they were thankful and seemed over paid. Met six more wagons heavily loaded with lead for the rebels. They were in great haste, for it was reported that the government troops from St. Louis were in close pursuit. I find the people everywhere excited, and the women and children frightened. Ridiculous stories are here circulated, and believed by some, that the Federal troops are murdering men, women and children indiscriminately. Rain most of the day. Stop at a farm house 26 miles from where I staid last night.

Thursday, 23d.—I had more streams to wade than for several days; caught some fish at noon, by standing in the brook and catching them with the hand. I roasted them for dinner. Stop to-night at a cabin after traveling 21 miles.

Friday, 24th.—It is very amusing, as well as gratifying, to notice the effect the occupation of St. Louis by Government troops, has on the people here. Two weeks ago, I am told, Union men were not safe; now they have increased vastly in numbers. Secession flags have been taken down, and the United States flag run up in their place, by the citizens. A few of the most violent secessionists have gone into the mountains, fearful that the government troops will be after them; and others are going South; I met several to-day. The people are so badly scared by the absurd stories afloat that I could get no place to stay to-night, and have built my camp-fire in a low damp valley; it is too dark to find a better place. I have to do without supper, but do not feel like eating anything I am in the habit of getting here. I regret having been obliged to part with many little valuables, during the last few days, for much less than they were worth. Distance, 19 miles.

Saturday, 25th.—Reached Ironton, Missouri, at noon, and am now completely worn out with hunger, fatigue and exposure. My body is covered with distressing sores from the bites of poisonous insects, much enlarged and inflamed by wearing and sleeping in clothing saturated with swamp water and rain. Distance, 12 miles.

The spring has been unusually wet; especially during the month of May. Storms were frequent, and some of them very violent. I found the streams everywhere high, and saw no bridges during the entire trip; and but few of the large rivers had ferries. Some of them were higher, I was told, than they had been for many years. I was obliged to avoid some secession strong holds and travel through the wildest part of the country, making the distance very much farther.

By the kindness of the officers of the Iron Mountain Railroad of Missouri, the St. Louis, Alton & Chicago road, and the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne & Chicago road, I was furnished with a free pass to Ohio; but in consequence of extreme soreness and weakness was obliged to stop on the way between St. Louis and Chicago, Sunday and Monday night, arriving at Chicago on the evening of the 28th of May, where I was obliged to remain three weeks.

On reaching the free States, I could not but notice the marked difference between the two sections. Business seems to be going on in the usual way here; people can come and go as they please, unmolested; and every one seems to enjoy a sense of security *which is not felt by any in the South*. There is truly a reign of terror there. Slavery is a power that *controls all—is feared by all*; and men can and do commit deeds of outrage and violence in the name of slavery with impunity.

During my residence in the South I frequently made serious blunders, for it is sometimes difficult to discriminate between the "niggers" and the white children. Many of the planters in the South have female slaves in their household who bear to them the relation of wife. There is less inducement there for men to marry, and bachelors are numerous among the wealthy. Yet they have the assurance to charge the Northern people with amalgamation and negro equality. On one occasion while

traveling in the South a sudden thunderstorm coming up obliged me to put up at the residence of a gentleman of whom I had before heard, Judge S——. I was acquainted with a son of his, who was a merchant in an adjoining town. The judge was a fine looking old gentleman, and a man of considerable influence in the county; he had been a widower for a number of years. A little boy came out to assist in putting away the horse; I asked him if Judge S—— was his father. He said he was. When we had put away the horse and carriage, we went into the house. The Judge was the only free (I will not say the only white) person living at home. In the course of conversation with the Judge, I alluded to the little boy, supposing him to be one of the family. "O, sir," said he, "you are mistaken, that is a nigger." *Yet the little boy told the truth.* Beside him, too, stood a little girl, with very fair skin, auburn hair and blue eyes. She too, was a "nigger" slave, and a daughter of the Judge. At his death they were to be sold, and the proceeds divided among his children by his *white* wife. This is a very common feature of their institution.

NEW PHILADELPHIA OHIO, July 29, 1861.

THE undersigned citizens of Ohio, are acquainted with Mr. A. E. Mathews, the author of the foregoing narrative, and believe him to be a man of truth and veracity, and as such cheerfully recommend him to the favorable consideration of the public :

G. W. McILVAINE,
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JOHN LAUGHEAD,
D. W. STAMBAUGH,
J. T. CRAMBLIT,
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